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## PAUL SCARRON AND ENGLISH TRAVESTY <sup>1</sup>

BY STURGIS E. LEAVITT

Italian burlesque and travesty writers have been dealt with in histories of Italian literature and the Italian burlesque movement as a whole has been covered by Symonds in his volumes on the Italian Renaissance; French travesty and burlesque have been discussed at length by Morillot, Brunetière and others,<sup>2</sup> and a summary of the vogue of this type of humor in England is to be found in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. Few attempts have been made, however, to discover a possible connection between these movements. A small pamphlet by Toldo<sup>3</sup> points out a few passages in Scarron's works similar to some in the Italian burlesque poems, Heiss would have Cotton's *Scarronides* a translation of Scarron's *Virgile travesti*, and Whibley makes Scarron an inspiration and model for English travesty writers of the seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup>

Without doubt the Restoration with its lawlessness and licence made it easy for travesty to gain a foothold in England, and once the pernicious weed got a start it was bound to find ready admirers

<sup>1</sup> The usual term *burlesque* is to be avoided as of too wide a scope, covering as it does parody, caricature, extravaganza, the mock-heroic and travesty. The following discussion deals chiefly with *travesty*, that type of humorous composition which has a model constantly in mind, retains its characters and much of its subject matter, and systematically ridicules both. In retaining both subject matter and the characters of its model, it differs from the mock-heroic and parody; it is more ambitious than caricature, and more restrained than extravaganza.

<sup>2</sup> Flügel, K. K., "*Geschichte des Burlesken*," Leipzig, 1794. Junker, H. P., "*Paul Scarron's Virgile travesti*," Oppeln, 1883. Morillot, P., "*Paul Scarron, Etude Biographique et Littéraire*," Paris, 1888. Heiss, H., "*Studien über die burleske Modedichtung Frankreichs im XVII Jahrhundert*," Romanische Forschungen, xxi. Brunetière, F., "*La Maladie du burlesque*" in "*Etudes critiques sur l'histoire de la littérature française*," Paris, 1917.

<sup>3</sup> Toldo, P., "*Ce que Scarron doit aux auteurs burlesques d'Italie*," Pavia, 1893.

<sup>4</sup> "Scarron was their openly acknowledged master. They did not make any attempt to belittle the debt which they owed to *Le Virgile Travesti*. They announced their obligation not merely in their style, but in their titles." *Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. ix, p. 286.

among tavern poets and their numerous friends. Considerable influence may have come from abroad but there is evidence that the seeds were already in English soil before this foreign influence began to make itself felt. In a volume of jocose verse entitled *Wit Restored*, written by Sir John Mennes and James Smith and published in 1658, there occurs a bit of verse surprisingly like the efforts of Scarron. As V. L. Jones has pointed out, this poem, *The Innovation of Penelope to Ulysses*, was probably written in or before 1640.<sup>5</sup> This fact dates it earlier than Scarron's *Typhon* and absolves that author from any connection with it. Like the *Typhon*<sup>6</sup> Smith's poem is not a travesty for he had no model to ridicule, but a glance at the production will make it clear that it is a forerunner of the actual travesties which later made their appearance in England. Perhaps the first thing to impress us is its total lack of respect for antiquity. The Trojan hero and his spouse are reduced to very ordinary individuals and are treated in a most familiar manner. Penelope, anxious at Ulysses' failure to return from the war, writes him a letter beginning:

My pretty Duck, my Pigsnie, my Ulysses  
Thy poor Penelope sends a thousand Kisses

Frequent anachronisms like the following at once remind one of Scarron although they fall far short of him in wit:

She don'd new Cloaths and sent the old ones packing  
And had her shoes rubbed over with Lamp blacking.

. . . . .

A stomacher upon her breast so bare  
For Strips and Gorgets were not then the weare.

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<sup>5</sup> Among the dedicatory epistles commendatory verses purport to come from James Atkins, John Mennes, the author himself, and James Massinger. The latter died about the middle of March, 1640. Cf. V. L. Jones, *English Satire, 1650-1700*, Harvard Thesis, 1911. Page 442, note.

<sup>6</sup> The *Typhon*, having no original model, is not a travesty. The spirit of it, however, is much like that of the *Virgile travesti*. Written a few years apart (1642 and 1648) the same disrespect for classic antiquity is manifested in each, whether it be for gods and goddesses or for the personages in Virgil's epic. The meter of both poems, the processes of ridicule (anachronism and personal comment), and the general tone are similar. It is evident that both were looked upon in much the same light by Scarron. Though not a real travesty, the *Typhon* so thoroughly prepared the way for it that when the *Virgile travesti* made its appearance six years later, it was assured of immediate success.

The poem is short, is the only one of its kind in the volume, and has little merit. In spite of its being styled an "Innovation" it probably did not attract unusual attention, for we find that the author did not feel called upon to write another. It probably passed in its day as merely a humorous poem, and yet, like the *Typhon* in France, it had its part in initiating English readers into the first principles of travesty.

Apparently Richard Flecknoe was one of the first in England to become acquainted with Scarron, mentioning him as early as 1656, in the preface to his *Diarium or Journal*, in company with such names as Aristophanes, Plautus, Cervantes, Tassoni, and even Mennes and Smith. Although Flecknoe's poem is in no sense a travesty its author contributed his share towards opening the way for it by imitating one passage in the *Virgile travesti*. The sixth *Jornada* of the *Diarium* begins as follows:

And now Aurora blushing red,  
Came stealing out of Titan's bed,  
Whilst the hours that swiftly run,  
Harnass'd the horses of the Sun.  
Now Chantecleer with stretcht-out wings,  
The glad approach of Phoebus sings.  
While Bats and Owls, and birds of night  
Were all confounded, put to flight.  
All which is only for to say  
In Poets language, that 'twas day.

Scarron's version runs in this manner:

La lune et toutes ses suivantes,  
Ce sont les étoiles errantes.  
Se retiroient sans faire bruit,  
Ainsi que les oiseaux de nuit,  
Et l'aurore, franche coquette,  
Laissant ronfler dans sa couchette  
Son cocu caduc et grison,  
Se promenoit par l'horizon,  
Peignant la surface des choses  
D'une belle couleur de roses:  
Cela veut dire que le jour  
Après la nuit vint à son tour.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1664 marks the beginning of real travesty in England. In that year Charles Cotton published his *Scarronides*, or travesty

<sup>1</sup> Fournel, V., "*Le Virgile travesti*," Paris, 1875, p. 266.

of the first book of the *Æneid*. The popularity of this travesty gives Cotton the most conspicuous place in a motley and disreputable crowd of scribblers. A second edition appeared in 1665, a third including a travesty of the fourth *Æneid*, came out in 1667, and five more editions had been published by 1709.<sup>8</sup> The *Scarronides*, though not a translation of Scarron's *Virgile travesti*, almost certainly owes its inspiration to it. It is on the same subject, employs the same meter, and depends, as does Scarron's poem, upon anachronism for its chief appeal. These anachronisms are quite as frequent as those in the French but they are totally devoid of the element of surprise and the pungency so characteristic of Scarron. They seem more like a continuation of the efforts of Smith in the *Penelope* than any conscious imitation of Scarron.

Quite a number of passages in the *Scarronides* appear at first sight to be similar to the *Virgile*, but most of these similarities are probably due to the fact that they are based on a common model. In instances where Scarron and Cotton depart from the Latin text the evidence points toward a borrowing from the French, as for example, the remarks of Æneas when he stands before the pictures in the Carthaginian temple:

Il n'est pays si reculé  
Où notre nom ne soit allé! \*

How came these here to be pictured thus.  
Sure all the world has heard of us.<sup>10</sup>

In the fourth book, where Dido has made up her mind to die,<sup>11</sup> both authors have her review various modes of suicide and reject them all for equally trivial reasons:

Elle chercha dans sa cervelle  
Quelque mode de mort nouvelle:  
De se transpercer d'un couteau,  
Elle craint un peu trop sa peau;  
De s'en aller comme une bête  
Contre un mur se rompre la tête.

\* 1670, 1672, 1678, 1682, 1709.

\* *Virgile travesti*, p. 71.

<sup>10</sup> " *Scarronides, or Virgile Travesty*:" London, 1672, p. 38.

<sup>11</sup> Et partes animum versabat in omnes,  
Invisam quaerens quam primum abrumpere lucem.

*Aeneid*, iv, 630, 631.

Ou bien s'étrangler d'un licol  
 Au grand dommage de son col,  
 Cette mort est pour le vulgaire;  
 Des rois ne la pratiquent guère.  
 De monter sur quelque lieu haut,  
 Et puis de là prendre le saut,  
 Elle peut, tombant sur la tête,  
 Montrer quelque lieu déshonnête.<sup>12</sup>

In Mind she weigh'd as she sat crying,  
 What kind of Death was best to die in.  
 Poison she thought would not be quick,  
 And, which was worse would make her sick.  
 That being therefore waiv'd, she thought  
 That neatly cutting her own throat  
 Might serve to do her business for her:  
 But that she thought upon with Horror,  
 Because 'twould hurt her; neither could  
 She well endure to see her Blood.  
 The next came in her Thoughts was drowning.  
 That way she thought 'twould be a done thing

But then again she fell a thinking,  
 She should be somewhat long in sinking,  
 Having been ever light of members;  
 And, to dissuade her more remembers,  
 'Twould spoyl the Cloaths might do someone  
 Credit when she was dead and gone.<sup>13</sup>

These and other similarities<sup>14</sup> make it fairly certain that Cotton owes Scarron somewhat more than mere inspiration for his travesty. But the fact that he falls so far short of Scarron's aptness for anachronism and overlooks altogether his numerous digressions (one of Scarron's most effective humoristic touches) makes it seem equally certain that he did not duly appreciate the *Virgile travesti*. Cotton's travesty is in every respect inferior to the French work. It is carelessly written, coarse in the extreme, and most uninteresting. Cotton lacked the wit of Scarron and failed to imprint his work with a personal touch. The *Scarronides* seems like a book

<sup>12</sup> *Virgile travesti*, p. 177.

<sup>13</sup> *Scarronides*, p. 140.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Virgile*, p. 66, "J'aurai plaisir. . ." and *Scarronides*, p. 29, "She is a queen"; *Vir.*, p. 84, "Les beaux conviés. . ." and *Sc.*, p. 52, "She served. . ."; *Vir.*, p. 167, "Il gratte. . ." and *Sc.*, p. 97, "In this quandary. . ."; *Vir.*, p. 185, "Frappant sur quiconque. . ." and *Sc.*, p. 146, "Nancy. . ."

ground out to make a little money, and the number of editions published seems to indicate that in this respect it was a success.

Cotton made another attempt at travesty in 1675 with his *Scoffer Scoft, or Lucian Burlesqued*. In this his inventions are no happier, the anachronisms are rarer, and the author gives free rein to the coarseness which probably made the *Scarronides* popular. No trace of any imitation of Scarron is to be found. *The Scoffer Scoft* probably owes its existence to the success of the *Scarronides* and in this way it has some connection with Scarron, although the relationship is far removed.

Scarron's *Typhon* was translated into English in 1665 under the title *The Gyants War with the Gods*, and, just as it opened the way for travesty in France, so it must have added its part to the popularity of travesty in England. The translation is of no great merit; it is written in coarse language, some of the passages in the original are omitted and the best parts are poorly rendered. The *Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Cambridge History of English Literature* ascribe the translation to John Phillips,<sup>15</sup> but this can hardly be correct. With all his knowledge of languages and his experience as a translator John Phillips could surely have done better than that.<sup>16</sup>

In the same year a J. Scudamore got out a *Homer à la Mode*, a travesty of the first book of the *Iliad*. This author does not mention Scarron and in no place does he imitate him. Scudamore employs the same octosyllabic couplet that Cotton uses and may have learned from him the lesson of anachronism, for we find that the Greeks wore "good Lochram Shirts and well vamped Boots made of good neat's Leather" and that Briseis was brought "from her needles and samples to the two town beedles." This may have called forth a smile when travesty was an innovation, but today it seems decidedly flat. There is no particular merit about Scudamore's poem except that it seems to give promise of better things in travesty, since its language does not offend decency in the way Cotton's productions do.

This promise was not destined to be immediately fulfilled for the author of *Cataplus, or Æneas his descent into Hell*, calling on

<sup>15</sup> See *D. N. B.*, article *Phillips* and *C. H. E. L.*, Vol. IX, p. 300.

<sup>16</sup> The *Gyants War* and the *Maronides* (see below) are so different in accuracy, vocabulary, and style that the two can hardly be the work of the same man.

. . . ye devils great and small,  
Lucifer, Beelzebub, Belial,

finds that decency has no place in travesty. His source of inspiration is probably indicated by his request to these devils to give him

. . . . a vein that may surpass  
Homer a la mode or Hudibras.

From Scudamore he very likely acquired the trick of anachronism and to our no great surprise *Aeneas* meets Bevis, Amadis de Gaul, Robin Hood, and Little John in Hell and finds them wearing "Holland Drawers and Lac'd Cravats." *Hudibras* undoubtedly contributed the humoristic touch of citing vague authority for unimportant detail which we find occasionally, as for example in the description of Dædalus.

Wings with him always he did carry  
.  
From Woodcock or from water-duck,  
From phesant, partridge, teal and widgeon;  
Some say this and some say that,  
Authors write I know not what.<sup>17</sup>

Compare Butler in the same manner,

But here our authors make a doubt,  
Whether he (Hudibras) was more wise or stout.  
Some hold the one, and some the other,<sup>18</sup>

But if we stop to make further inquiry as to where Butler picked up this trick of style, the deadly parallel passage points to Scarron. Examples like the following are frequent enough in the *Virgile travesti*:

Pour Ascagne, elle (Venus) l'endormit  
D'un certain charme qu'elle fit,  
Les uns disent d'un dormitoire  
Les autres en le faisant boire  
Un peu qu'il ne faut de vin.<sup>19</sup>

This connection with Scarron via Butler<sup>20</sup> is the only one to be

<sup>17</sup> *Cataplus, or Aeneas his descent into Hell, a mock poem, in imitation of the sixth of Virgil's Aeneis.* London, 1672. p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Hudibras*, Part I, Canto I, 29, 30.

<sup>19</sup> *Virgile*, p. 82.

<sup>20</sup> For a more complete discussion of Butler's indebtedness to Scarron see the author's thesis (Harvard), *Scarron in England, 1656-1800*.



found and there is nothing in the travesty to indicate that its author had any first hand knowledge of him or his works.

In 1672 John Phillips translated the fifth, and in 1673 the sixth book of Scarron's *Virgile travesti*, reprinting them in one volume in 1678. *The Maronides, or Virgil Travesty*, as Phillips called it, is a very good translation of the French, but to this day it has passed as an original work.<sup>21</sup> Phillips deviates from the text at times and tries to adapt the translation to English readers by such anachronisms as references to Bartholomew Fair, Billingsgate, Park of Whetstone, and by putting Ben Jonson, Chaucer, Carew, Shakespere, and Cowley in Elysium, but for the most part he is content to follow Scarron line for line and sometimes word for word. In only one instance does he acknowledge his indebtedness to Scarron, and then indirectly:—in book five, after the passage where the serpent has unexpectedly eaten Æneas' sacrifice, Phillips says,

Away he slip't but heaven knowes how  
The Frenchman saies 'twas through a Trou.<sup>22</sup>

Ovid came in for his share of ridicule in the *Ovidius Exulans*, 1673. Its author was not sufficiently proud of his work to sign his name to it, but the pseudonym "Naso Scarronomimus" is enlightening. Scarron is mentioned again in the preface: "I was going to give you a character of myself as Scarron has done, but knowing how far I come short of his wit, . . . I shall upon better consideration leave my picture to be drawn by somebody else." The author of this travesty rises above the coarseness of most of his contemporaries, but beyond this there is nothing to recommend the work. The usual anachronisms are dragged in by the heels, Leander swims the Thames instead of the Hellespont, and references are made to London Bridge, Gravesend, etc., but they do not relieve the monotony of the poems. Even if we admit that Scarron inspired this set of travesties his influence can be traced no further, for not a single passage shows any similarity to anything he has written.

<sup>21</sup> See *D. N. B.* article *Phillips* and *C. H. E. L.*, Vol. ix, p. 288.

<sup>22</sup>                   Serpentant sur son jaune ventre,  
Le bon drôle de serpent rentre;  
Virgil ne dit pas par où,  
Je crois que ce fut par un trou:                   *Virgile*, p. 196.

In the case of *The Wits Paraphrased*, 1680, we find an exceedingly coarse travesty of an English translation of Ovid.<sup>23</sup> The author seems to have been unacquainted with Scarron; at least he does not mention him and in no place does he imitate him. His procedure is to follow the English verse as closely as he can and twist the meaning into vulgarity. There is no sign of the slightest originality.

The above poems are severely criticised by Alexander Radecliffe in the preface to his *Ovid Travesty* of the same year. He speaks of his rival's lack of skill, censures him for his poor similes, and says, "God save us, what are we when we are left to ourselves." Radecliffe boasts that he will not follow a translation as his predecessor has done, but will go directly back to Ovid. This he does, writing in ten-syllable rhymed couplets instead of the usual eight-syllable burlesque verse. No mention of Scarron is made and no line in the travesty gives any indication that Radecliffe knew him. The *Ovid Travesty* far surpasses its predecessor in one respect, vulgarity, and this may account for its success—four more editions within twenty-five years.<sup>24</sup>

The next year an anonymous *Homer Alamode* put in its appearance. Its author shows himself familiar with the leading jocose poems of the time, for in an introductory letter to his friend "Anthony Le-Nobody" he mentions several:

Scarron's a fool, and Hudibras  
He is, what is he? Why an Ass  
And so's Leander's bawdy Poem<sup>25</sup>  
And Maronides, if you know 'um.

Scarron's name evidently had some talismanic virtue to the author, for the travesty is dated "Scarron-ottonia, Anno Risus Inventi 5677." The general tone of the poem, vulgar and commonplace though it is, reminds one vaguely of his style. This writer seems to have picked up one of Scarron's peculiarities which had pre-

<sup>23</sup> *Ovids Epistles, Translated by Several Hands*, London, 1680. Among the "hands" are Mr. Dryden, Tho. Flatman, Mr. Settle, and Mr. Otway.

<sup>24</sup> 1681, 1696, 1697, and 1705.

<sup>25</sup> *Hero and Leander in Burlesque*, by William Wycherley. London, 1669. The word bawdy is appropriate, the poem simply grovels in filth. There is no indication that Wycherley had any knowledge of Scarron's burlesque poem on the same subject, *Hero and Léandre*, 1656.

vously been overlooked, that of calling the reader's attention to trivial points which the classic writer had failed to explain. An occasional attempt at this sort of literary criticism is made but with little success as compared with similar passages in the *Virgile travesti*.

An anonymous *Scarronides*, based on the second book of the *Æneid*, appeared in 1692. This is perhaps the weakest effort of all, a sad attempt at humor by someone who had no sense of it. In spite of its title this travesty has no connection with Scarron and is so far inferior to Cotton's work that it can hardly be his.<sup>26</sup> No doubt its author wanted to make a little easy money on another's reputation.

With this last *Scarronides* the vogue of English travesty was on the wane, although Radecliffe's *Ovid Travesty* appeared in three more editions (1696, 1697, and 1705) and Cotton's *Scarronides* received its eighth impression in 1709. Occasional approaches to travesty appear from time to time, but they are attempts at modernizing rather than a deliberate effort to humble the ancients. The close of the seventeenth century, however, did not see the end of travesty, for several important examples occur in the eighteenth. Gay's *Ovid in Masquerade*,<sup>27</sup> 1719, continues the Cotton tradition with numerous passages reminiscent of the *Scarronides*, and in 1758 another disciple of Cotton published a travesty of Maphæus,<sup>28</sup> borrowing many of Cotton's phrases and so closely imitating him that it might well pass for Cotton's work. A statement in the preface to the effect that "some may deem it a Degree of Presumption in me to undertake an English burlesque of a Latin poet, after that of Cotton's which was so well received, so much admired," would seem to indicate that Cotton's travesties were still rather widely read. This is also attested by the appearance of the *Scar-*

<sup>26</sup> Cotton died in 1687.

<sup>27</sup> *Ovid in Masquerade. Being a burlesque upon the XIIIth book of his Metamorphoses containing the Celebrated Speeches of Ajax and Achilles.* By Joseph Gay. London, 1719. Gay must have felt that the time for travesty was passing for he half-heartedly apologizes for trying it.

<sup>28</sup> *The Canto added by Maphæus to Virgil's Twelve books of Aeneas, from the original bombastic done into English Hudibrastic; with notes beneath, and Latin text in ev'ry other page annex.* London, 1758. The Maphæus in spite of being "done into English Hudibrastic" makes no reference to the incidents in *Hudibras* and borrows none of its phrasing.

*ronides* in numerous editions of Cotton's works during the eighteenth century.<sup>29</sup> Pope's translation of Homer called forth a travesty by Thomas Bridges in 1762.<sup>30</sup> In this only a few phrases can possibly be connected with Cotton and the resemblance is so slight as to almost argue against any connection with him. On the other hand, Bridges seems to have been well acquainted with Butler's *Hudibras*, for he refers to it frequently and borrows not a little of its phraseology. This, however, does not keep the poem from being inconceivably dull, and we find it hard to understand how it could have received five impressions in the course of the century.<sup>31</sup>

The above mentioned travesties are unfortunately not a complete list,<sup>32</sup> but they are sufficient to show that Scarron did not play so prominent a part in this movement as Whibley would have us suppose. Smith, as we have seen, prepared the way with his *Innovation of Penelope*, and Cotton's imitation of the *Virgile travesti* definitely established the fashion and gave it sufficient impetus to run through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Among the crowd of doggerel writers following in Cotton's wake, some were unacquainted with Scarron, some found him a name to conjure with and an inspiration to follow, and but few knew his

<sup>29</sup> The *Scarronides* appeared in editions of Cotton's works in 1715, 1725, 1765, 1776.

<sup>30</sup> Pope, we all know to please the nation,  
Published an elegant translation,  
But for all that, his lines mayn't please  
The jocund tribe as much as these;

(Preface to *A Burlesque Translation of Homer*, by Thomas Bridges.)

<sup>31</sup> 1762, 1764, 1767, 1770, and 1797.

<sup>32</sup> The following travesties are not accessible to me,—

1685.—Monsey, R. *Scarronides: or Virgile Travestie, A Mock-Poem. Being the Second Book of Virgil's Aeneas, Translated into English Burlesque.*

1683.—Lucian's *Ghost* (?).

1684.—Lucian's *Dialogues from the Greek done into English burlesque.*

1704.—B. M. *Typhon: or the War of the Gods and the Giants. A Burlesque Poem in imitation of Mons. Scarron.*

1720.—Meston, *Phaeton or the first Fable of the Second Book of Ovid's Metamorphoses burlesqu'd.*

1774.—*The Story of Aeneas and Dido, from the fourth book of the Aeneid burlesqued.*

work well enough to borrow from it. Among those who did it is interesting to note the case of Phillips, whose almost literal translation could not compete with the distinctly inferior *Scarronides*.

Protest against the rank growth of travesty came late in the seventeenth century after the mania had reached its height and was on its decline. Soame, in his adaptation of Boileau's *Art Poétique*, 1683, does not mention any of these travesties in his denunciation of the "Dull Burlesque" which

. . . appeared with Impudence  
And pleased by Novelty in Spite of Sence.

In 1712, on the other hand, Ozell's adaptation of the same work finds that such "low stuff" as Cotton's "Mock Virgil," in spite of being "for a while renowned," is none the less deserving of censure. This criticism, however, is somewhat perfunctory and would hardly be worth mentioning were it the only expression of disapproval among English men of letters. The only one who does come strongly out against travesty is Sir William Temple. In his *Essay upon ancient and modern learning*, 1690, he attacks the *genre* and those who were to him its individual representatives in France and England:

Another Vein which has entered and helpt to Corrupt our modern Poesy is that of ridicule, . . . It began first in Verse with an Italian Poem, called *La Secchia Rapita*, was pursued by Scarron in French with his *Virgil Travesty*, and in English by Sir John Mince (*Mennes?*), *Hudibras*, and Cotton, and with greater height of Burlesque in the English than, I think, in any other language. But let the Execution be what it will, the Design, the Custom and Example are very pernicious to Poetry, and indeed to all Virtue and good Qualities among Men, which must be disheartened by finding how unjustly and undistinguish't they fall under the lash of Raillery, and this Vein of Ridiculing the Good as well as the Ill, the Guilty and Innocent together. 'Tis a very poor tho' common Pretence to merit, to make it appear by the Faults of other Men. A mean Wit or Beauty may pass in a Room, where the rest of the Company are allowed to have none; 'tis something to sparkle among Diamonds, but to shine among Pebbles is neither Credit nor Value worth the pretending.<sup>23</sup>

If we find few protests in England against travesty we may well conjecture that its low character kept it from readers possessing a

<sup>23</sup> *Essay upon ancient and modern learning*. Spingarn edition, Oxford, 1909. p. 71-2.

true sense of literature. This was not the case with Scarron's *Virgile travesti*, which was read and enjoyed by some of the most cultured people of France. The English versions probably made their chief appeal to tavern poets and their friends, held under by Puritan rule and given full license by the Restoration. These admirers of low literature must have been fairly numerous, however, to have given it the popularity it enjoyed. Undoubtedly this success would have been even greater but for two distracting influences; the rise and development of the mock-heroic in the latter part of the seventeenth century and the popularity of Butler's *Hudibras*, which ran through numerous editions from 1663 on and called forth imitation after imitation from the same class of would-be poets that trailed along after Cotton.

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